

METHOD OF TREATING LATEX ARTICLES AND ARTICLES PRODUCED THEREBY

Abstract of the Disclosure

A process of treating natural rubber latex articles, and the article produced by the process, such as medical gloves, to render them safe for contact with persons sensitive to antigenic latex protein normally present in the articles. The article is manufactured in accordance with conventional methods and then exposed to an oxidizing agent, such as a halogen gas, and specifically fluorine, to eliminate or reduce to negligible levels the antigenic latex protein in the article. In a preferred embodiment, a quantity of the articles are placed in a fluorination chamber where they are contacted with a gaseous mixture containing a small proportion of fluorine gas.. The mixture introduced into the chamber is at ambient temperature and pressure, i.e., approximately 72 °F and 14.7 psi, and the contact time between the article and the gaseous mixture is very short, on the order of only about three minutes. Articles treated in accordance with the invention retain desired physical properties such as color, strength and flexibility.